

Chicago Tribune, February 9, 2009

A top-10 list of Lake County's most-wanted gang members is scheduled to be released Monday by local officials and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

A similar list last year resulted in the arrests of those identified as gang members wanted for a variety of crimes, including murder, narcotics possession, unlawful use of a weapon and other offenses.

"We have a whole new top-10 list of gang members who have been a nuisance in the area," said Eric Elk, a spokesman for U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk's North Shore office.

Kirk (R-Ill.) and Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran are expected to join Andy Traver, the ATF's special agent in charge, at a news conference at 11 a.m. in the ATF's Chicago office, 525 W. Van Buren St.

In seeking to curb gang activity in Lake County, the ATF has focused on communities such as Waukegan, North Chicago, Mundelein, Round Lake and Zion, Elk said.

According to the ATF's 2009 Gang Threat Assessment, the county has the third-most gang members in Illinois, trailing Cook and Will Counties.

Nationwide, Illinois ranks first in gang members per capita at 8 to 11 gang members per 1,000 residents, the study found.

In Lake County, authorities estimate that as many as 3,500 gang members live north of Lake Cook Road.